

ABSTRACT

Aspects of the invention are found in a method for collecting information associated with a vending machine. The method has the steps of detecting a vending event associated with the vending machine; storing a dataset stored in a standard format associated with the vending event; 5 retrieving the dataset; parsing at least one data field from the dataset; transmitting the at least one data field. In one embodiment the standard format is the DEX format. Further the data field may be sent in a data packet. The data packet may be compressed and encrypted before sending. Further, the data packet may be transmitted with an identifier associated with the machine. The data field can be transmitted to a handheld circuitry, which could be wireless in nature. The at 10 least one data field may be transmitted to a central monitoring facility. The data field may be transmitted by wireless communication and/or through an interconnected network. Further the data packet may be transmitted through various communications means including a telephone line, an Ethernet, a wireless Ethernet, a two-way paging system, a mobile phone system, a cellular phone system, a packet-radio system, a fiber optic network and the Bluetooth (TM) wireless communication standard. The data packet may also be parsed and/or sent in response to a polling signal.

1

013039.00014:122836.02

Express Mail #EL 912 309 788 US